

***Being Logical*, D.Q. McInerny**

English 11 Summer Reading

What does it mean to *be* logical? We hope this book will help you learn exactly what this means. Beyond that, we hope that having this knowledge will help make you a more responsible thinker and a more effective communicator. These two goals are, after all, two of the primary purposes of the work done in the English classroom.

There will be a comprehensive test the second day of school, so you need to have read the entire book before school starts. During the first two weeks of school, you will be compiling a portfolio applying the book's ideas to various forms of media and demonstrating comprehension of the terms central to the study of logic. **The test and the activities in the portfolio will require comprehension of the content of this very short and accessible book.**

Take notes as you read, paying special attention to **terms (and definitions) that are new to you**. This will make your first portfolio assignment, a customized dictionary of logical terms, much easier. Details and expectations for the portfolio will be submitted in class the first day of school.

Below is a recommended reading schedule. People read (and comprehend) at different paces, so keep in mind that these are only recommendations. **However, please note: you will retain the information better if you do not spread the reading out over too long a period of time.** Also, some of this information will be new and/or foreign to you, so you will likely need to re-read some sections to understand the information.

Preface and Part 1: Preparing the Mind for Logic—1 session

Part 2: The Basic Principles of Logic—2-3 sessions

Part 3: Argument-The Language of Logic—4-5 sessions

Part 4: The Sources of Illogical Thinking—1-2 sessions

Part 5 and Afterword: The Principal Forms of Illogical Thinking—4-5 sessions

Five Suggestions/Reminders for Successful Reading Sessions

- 1) Read in a non-distracting **environment**. Be selective: almost every place is a distracting environment in 21st century America.
- 2) **Focus** only on the words on the page and the ideas they convey. Active reading demands your whole attention. Successful “multi-tasking” only works for simple tasks, so set aside other tasks for later. Secure time to read and take notes. Turn (literally) away from the TV or computer screen; put your phone in another room—it will wait for you.
- 3) Be deliberate about **when** you read. Some say, “every time I try to read, I fall asleep.” This is mostly said by people who try to read only in bed before going to sleep. Don't be that person. Pick a time when you're alert and wide awake.
- 4) Take time to **reflect** critically on what you have read. If you cannot restate or describe (in detail) what you just read, you did not read actively. Similarly, if you have no questions about what you just read, you probably did not read actively.
- 5) **Re-read**, if necessary. Even the most astute, critical readers have to re-read passages. Some sentences or passages require multiple re-readings. It is not “the author's fault” if you do not understand the language—try again, then keep trying until it makes some sense to you.